

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 404 282

SO 027 524

AUTHOR Ahmed, Naseem
TITLE Rainbows: Stories and Customs from Around the World.
Grades 3-6.
REPORT NO ISBN-56417-855-2
PUB DATE 96
NOTE 82p.; Published by Good Apple, Division of Simon and Schuster, 299 Jefferson Rd., P.O. Box 480, Parsippany, NJ 07054-0480.
AVAILABLE FROM Frank Schaffer Publications, 23740 Hawthorne Boulevard, Torrance, CA 90505.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Instructional Materials (For Learner) (051) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cultural Activities; Cultural Awareness; Elementary Education; Folk Culture; *Foreign Countries; Global Approach; Instructional Materials; Interdisciplinary Approach; *Multicultural Education; *Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS China; Costa Rica; Festivals; India; Japan; Malaysia; New Mexico; Nigeria; Taiwan; Thailand

ABSTRACT

This book, appropriate for use in grades 3-6, presents information about nine regions of the world: Malaysia; Costa Rica; Taiwan; New Mexico, United States; Japan; India; Nigeria; Thailand; and China. Each region is presented in a three part format: (1) Background information provides a look at the geographical location, the flag, and the social description of each region; (2) the festival section introduces information on a popular festival typical to the region; and (3) the third section gives a story based on the prevalent folk culture of the region. Reproducible sheets encourage writing, research, drawing, and extension activities related to each region. (MM)

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Grades 3-6

RAINBOWS

Stories and Customs from Around the World

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Naseem Ahmed

RAINBOWS

**Stories and Customs
from Around the World**

Created by Naseem Ahmed



Good Apple

Dedication

For my daughter Nyrene, who is the inspiration behind *Rainbows*. Nyrene takes me along her childhood path and helps me grow with her. I hope this book can be shared with as many other children as possible.

With Special Thanks

International students at U.S. educational institutions are a wealth of cross-cultural information and experience. Since my early years in the United States as a student from Bangladesh, I have respected efforts that acknowledge and utilize this potential. I thank NAFSA: Association of International Educators for endorsing my ideas and for providing funding for the initial *Rainbows* project from which this book took root.

The nine stories featured in this book were among entries (representing 22 countries and regions) in a story-writing contest held among students at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. This book would not have been possible without the cooperation, contributions, information, and insights of U.S. students and international students at SIUC. I am especially thankful to all who contributed their rich folklore and information on which this book is based.

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GOOD APPLE

An Imprint of Modern Curriculum

A Division of Simon and Schuster

299 Jefferson Road, P.O. Box 480

Parsippany, NJ 07054-0480

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ISBN: 1-56417-855-2

23456789 MAL 01 00 99 98 97 96

About the Book

Rainbows is more than a storybook. Each story represents a geographical region of the world. Information about each region is presented in three parts, each part including a student reproducible for hands-on involvement and cross-cultural sharing. The three-part format is as follows:

Background information about each region includes the geographical location, an explanation of the flag, and a brief social description of the region. In addition to English and wherever appropriate, the name of the region is printed in the native language.

A map and an illustration of the flag accompany the write-up about each country. The student reproducible fosters an appreciation for geography and culture and encourages research and extension activities.

The Festival section presents information on a popular festival typical to the region and in which children take part and have a lot of fun. The student reproducible generates interest and encourages writing and other ways of sharing personal experiences and responses.

The Story is representative of the region and is based on prevalent folk culture. The postreading reproducible alerts readers and listeners to the cultural context of the story and encourages discussion and follow-up activities.

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Regions





Malaysia

10

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M Malaysia

Malaysia is located in southeast Asia, just north of the equator. It is slightly larger than New Mexico. Its two distinct regions are separated by four hundred miles of the South China Sea. Kuala Lumpur is the capital city.

The people of Malaysia are from a variety of cultures—Malay, Chinese, and Indian. Bahasa Malaysia (Malay) is the official language, but English is widely used throughout the country and is taught in all the schools. Malaysia is the world's largest producer of rubber and tin. Abundant tropical fruits grow in Malaysia, including the durian, a large, strong-flavored, oval-shaped fruit, popularly called the king of fruits.

The Malaysian flag has 14 horizontal red and white stripes representing its 13 states and the federal government. The yellow crescent and star in the dark blue field at the top left are the symbols of the Islamic religion. Red stands for courage, white for sincerity, and yellow for the color of royalty.



Around the World

Use the map and the information about Malaysia to answer these questions.

1. Part of Malaysia is located on a **peninsula** and part on an **island**.
Which word means a body of land completely surrounded by water?

Which word means a body of land almost surrounded by water?

- _____
2. Name three other places that are located in the same part of the world as Malaysia.

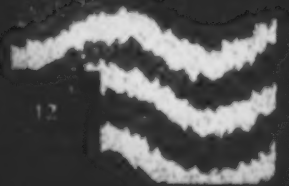
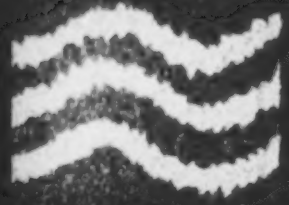
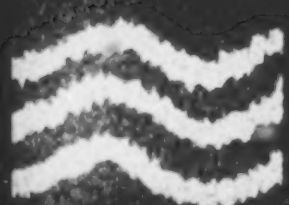
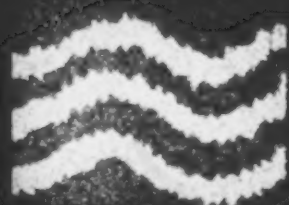
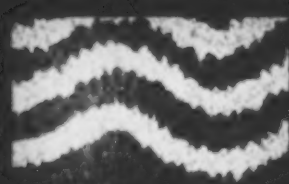
- _____
3. Malaysia produces more rubber and tin than any other country. On the back of this sheet, draw and label a picture of something made from one of these resources. (Feel free to check a reference book.)

Decide whether each statement below tells about Malaysia, the United States, or both. Write *U.S.*, *Malaysia*, or *both* on each line.

1. People here come from different cultures. _____
2. The official language is Malay. _____
3. English is taught in the schools. _____
4. Its flag has 50 stars. _____

Think and Tell

What do the 14 red and white stripes on the Malaysian flag represent? How do these stripes compare with the meaning of the 13 stripes on the United States flag?



H

Raya Pu

FESTIVAL

Hari Raya Puasa marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan. During this month, Muslims throughout the world fast by not eating or drinking from dawn to dusk. In Malaysia, this national holiday is marked by special programs in the schools, on radio, and on television.

Early in the morning of this festival, children dress in new clothes, seek blessings from their parents, and ask for pardon. The children spend the day visiting friends and relatives, from whom they usually receive gifts and money. Special sweets and cookies are made for this occasion. Houses are decorated with colorful lights, and children enjoy shows of fireworks and sparklers.

H

It's Your Turn!

1. Many Malaysian people are Muslims, meaning that they are members of the religion of Islam. Muslims around the world celebrate Hari Raya Puasa at the end of Ramadan. List three ways that this holiday is celebrated in Malaysia.

2. If your family celebrates Hari Raya Puasa, write about your customs for this day. If not, write about a day you do celebrate that has one or more of the same customs as Hari Raya Puasa.

THE

Clever Sang Kanchil

AND THE SELFISH BERUK

By Kasthuri Athinarayanan

*In Malay language, **Kanchil** stands for a delicate little mouse-deer that always appears quick, alert, and smart in Malay literature. The Kanchil is called Sang, which means "Sir." **Beruk** is a Malay term for a type of monkey with a black coat.*

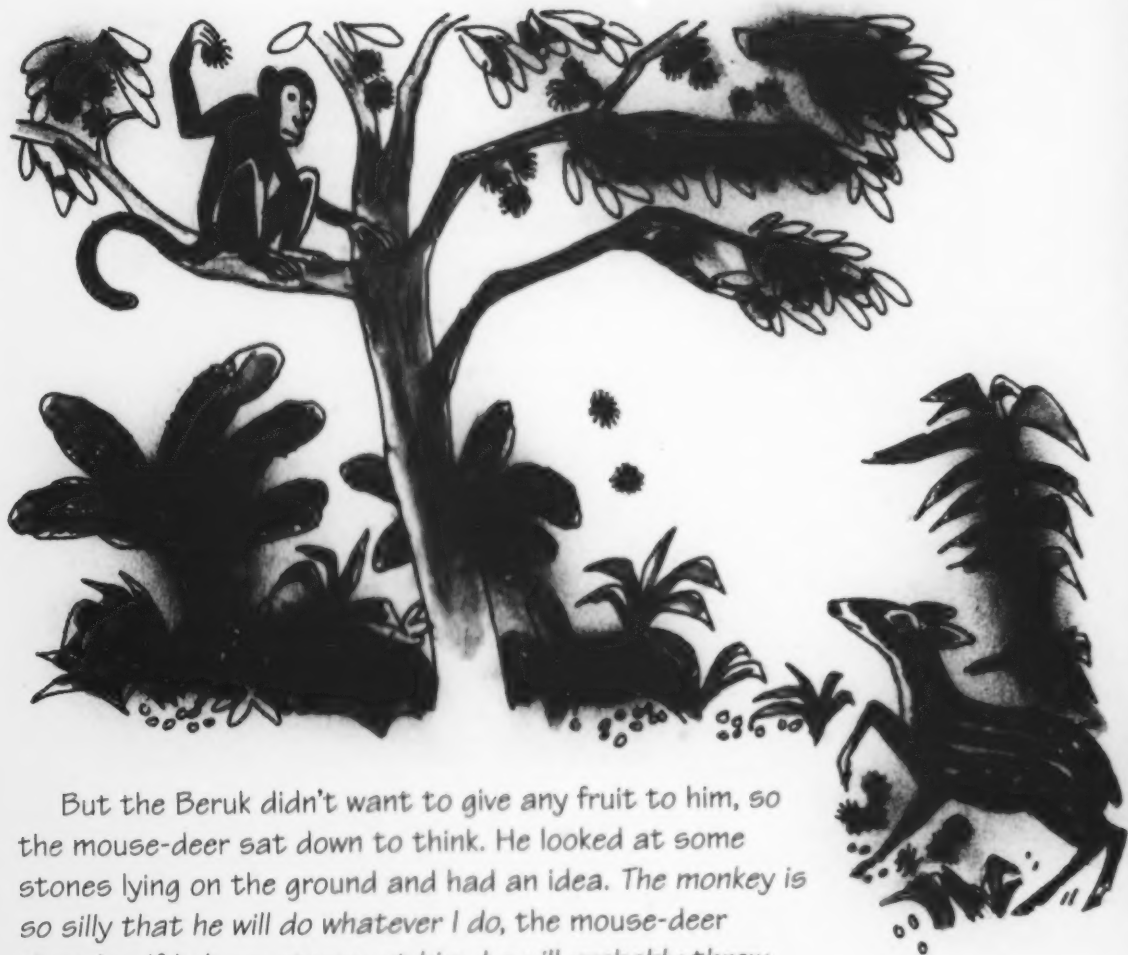
It was a hot day in the forest, and the little mouse-deer was very hungry. He was wishing for something to eat when he spotted a rambutan tree ripe with fruit. The mouse-deer ran to the tree but found that the fruits were too high to reach. He was very disappointed. He sat under the tree and soon fell asleep.

Later, a monkey came along swinging from tree to tree. He, too, was delighted to see the rambutan tree. He climbed to the top of the tree and started eating the rambutans. He noticed the mouse-deer asleep under the tree and began throwing rambutan seeds at him.

The mouse-deer woke up when he felt something fall on his head. He looked up and saw the monkey eating the juicy fruit. The mouse-deer was happy to see the monkey on the tree and asked, "Monkey, would you be kind enough to share some of the fruit with me?"

"No! Why don't you pick them yourself?" replied the monkey rudely.

"I am too short to reach any of the fruit," replied the mouse-deer.



But the Beruk didn't want to give any fruit to him, so the mouse-deer sat down to think. He looked at some stones lying on the ground and had an idea. The monkey is so silly that he will do whatever I do, the mouse-deer thought. If I throw stones at him, he will probably throw rambutans back at me.

So the mouse-deer threw a stone at the monkey. Foolishly, the monkey threw a rambutan at the mouse-deer. The mouse-deer was very happy and threw more and more stones at the monkey. The monkey, in turn, kept throwing more and more fruit at the mouse-deer.

Finally, there were no rambutans left on the tree. The mouse-deer gathered all the fruit and started laughing at the monkey.

"What are you laughing at?" the monkey demanded to know.

"There is no reward in being selfish. You must share whatever you have with your friends," replied the mouse-deer as he walked away.

Story Sense

1. Stories like "The Clever Sang Kanchil and the Selfish Beruk" are called **fables**. Fables teach lessons or morals. Finish the sentence below for the story about Sang Kanchil and the Beruk.

The moral of this story is _____

_____.

2. You may know the fable "The Tortoise and the Hare" or another one. Fables seem to be about animals, but they are really about the ways people act. List two animals that you could write about in a fable.

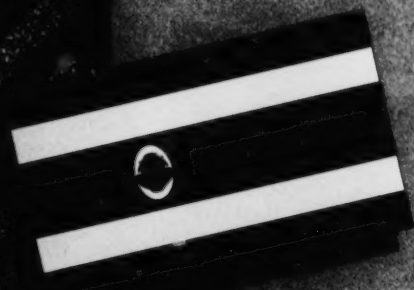
3. Think of a lesson one animal can teach the other in your fable.

4. In the fable from Malaysia, the mouse-deer was clever and the monkey was selfish. How will the animals in your fable act?

5. On your own, or with your class, write a short fable that teaches a lesson. You may wish to tell your fable in pictures instead of in words.

Costa Rica

Costa Rica



Costa Rica is in Central America, situated between Nicaragua and Panama. It was discovered by Columbus in 1502. Its size is slightly smaller than West Virginia. The capital city is San Jose.

Spanish is the official language of Costa Rica. The people are courteous, honest, and peace loving. It is one of the few countries in the world that does not have an army.

Sixty percent of Costa Rica's land is covered by rain forests, home to rare animals and birds, including the *quetzal*, a bird that cannot live in captivity. Costa Rica has green mountains and valleys, as well as white sand beaches. From the top of Poas Volcano, one of the many volcanoes in the country, one can see both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans.

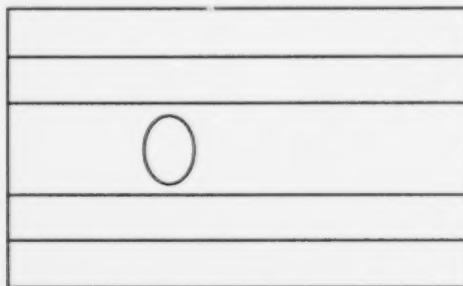
On the flag of Costa Rica, the white inner stripes signify peace. The red central band with the national coat of arms refers to the battle of Santa Rosa in 1820. The blue stripes at the top and bottom represent clear skies.

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Around the World

1. Use the information you have read to color the Costa Rican national flag.



Which color stripes on the flag represent peace? _____

What do the blue stripes stand for? _____

2. Use a map to help you fill in the answers below.

Name the countries that border Costa Rica.

Name the bodies of water that border Costa Rica.

Costa Rica is a part of the same continent as the United States.

Name that continent. _____

Look It Up!

In a book or encyclopedia article about Costa Rica, read more about its rain forests. On the back of this paper, write three facts that you did not know.

Think and Tell

Is it a good idea for a country to have an army? Explain your answer.



Dia Del Estudiante

(STUDENT DAY)

Student Day is celebrated throughout Costa Rica during October. It celebrates the importance of education and gives special recognition to the teaching profession. Costa Rica has one of the finest public education systems in the Americas. The people are proud that their country has more teachers than police.

On Student Day, students elect their student councils in an election that is very similar to the national Presidential election. Throughout the day, students run the schools and carry out the responsibilities of the principals, teachers, and other school staff. Teachers and administrators become students for that day.

Literary contests and theatrical and musical presentations take place in parks and public libraries. Student Day also celebrates Costa Rica's high literacy rate compared with other countries in North, Central, and South America. Costa Rica's literacy rate is 97 percent, second only to that of Cuba.



It's Your Turn!

With a partner, plan some fun ways to celebrate a Student Day at your school. You can get some ideas from the Costa Rican Student Day.

Write a schedule of events for your Student Day. Include something special for lunchtime, too. Your activities might take place in your school or at places in your community.

Student Day		
at _____ School		
Time	Event	Location

THE

Mouse-Fairy

By Josette Alvarado de Exprua

This story is about a fairy who lives in a tiny country, located in the heart of the Americas. This fairy lives in Costa Rica. The children of that country call her the Mouse-Fairy.

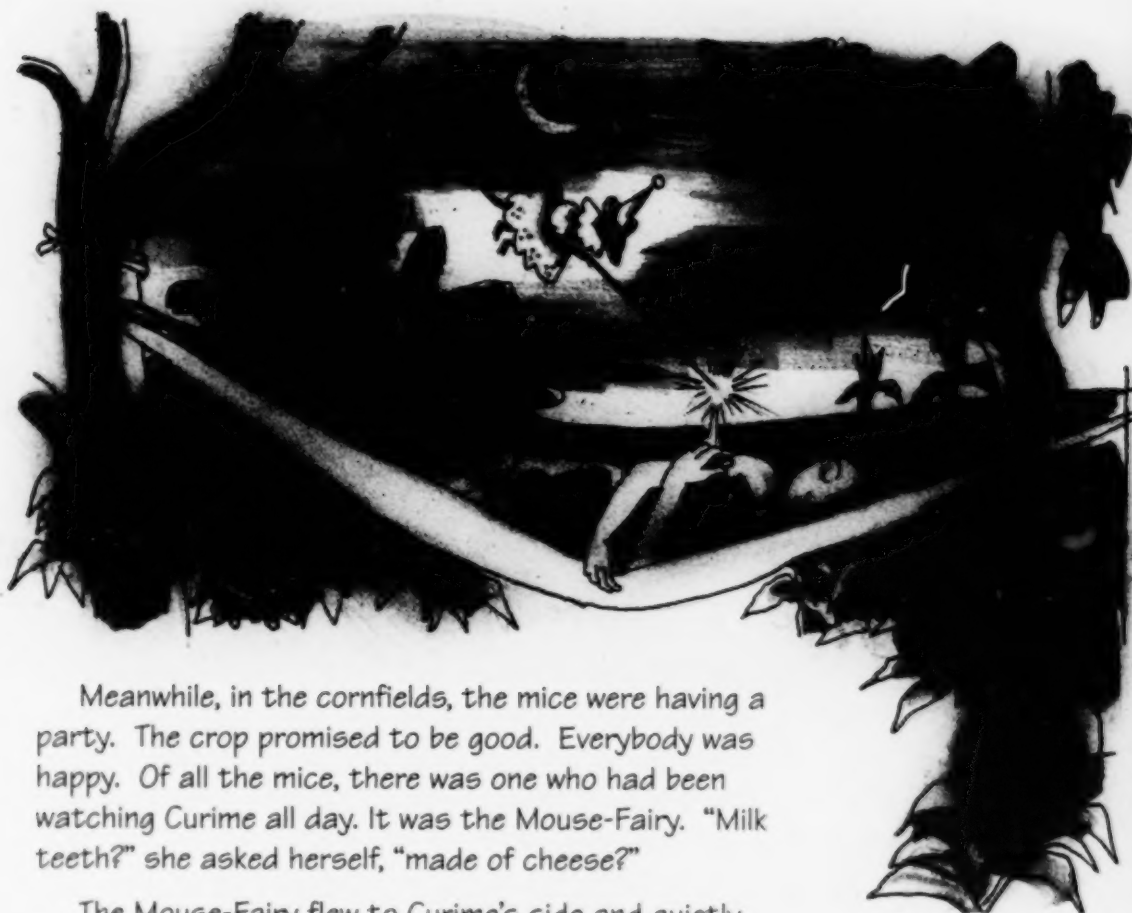
All over the world, when children are six years old, their teeth loosen and fall out. Over time, bigger and stronger teeth grow in their place. In Costa Rica, those first teeth are called milk teeth. People say they look like shiny drops of milk peeking out of children's smiles.

A long time ago, there lived a little Indian girl, a member of the Chorotega tribe. She was called Curime. When Curime was six, she lost her first tooth. "Mama," she said, showing her tooth. "My tooth is not made of milk. It looks more like a tiny shell that Father picks at the seashore."

"My dear," assured her mother. "Your teeth are made of milk—milk that has become hard as cheese."

Curime ran to the brook and looked at her reflection in the water. How would she eat sugar cane without her tooth? How would she eat mangoes and other fruit? How would she eat tortillas? One by one, tears started falling into the water. After a while, Curime fell asleep. Her father picked her up and carefully carried her to her hammock.

It was an especially peaceful night in May. Moonlight bathed the cornfields. A soft breeze rocked the banana plantation, and the wind carried the fragrance of weeds and fresh soil. Music from the brook was like a lullaby for Curime, who slept on in her hammock.



Meanwhile, in the cornfields, the mice were having a party. The crop promised to be good. Everybody was happy. Of all the mice, there was one who had been watching Curime all day. It was the Mouse-Fairy. "Milk teeth?" she asked herself, "made of cheese?"

The Mouse-Fairy flew to Curime's side and quietly searched for the tooth. It was still in Curime's hand. Ever so gently, the Mouse-Fairy touched it with her magic wand. Sparkles and more sparkles! The tooth turned to fruit, Curime's favorite treat.

What happiness the next day! Curime did not have her tooth but had delicious mangoes and bananas. How easily she could eat them! Happily, Curime bit into the ripe fruit. She didn't need her tiny tooth after all.

"You see, your tooth was really made of milk," her mother told her. "The Mouse-Fairy took the little piece of cheese and traded it for your favorite treats."

This happened many years ago in Costa Rica. But the Mouse-Fairy is still busy in that country. She does not leave fruit anymore. Instead, she leaves a round, shiny coin. The coin reminds us of the full moon in May when Curime lost her first tooth.



Story Sense

1. What do you do when a loose tooth comes out? Write or tell about your family's custom. Do you have a story about the Tooth Fairy?
2. Read or listen again to the part of the story that describes Curime's peaceful night. Find words that appeal to your senses. What could Curime see? What did she feel and smell? What could she hear? Write some of these words and phrases below.

3. In Costa Rica, native people often sleep in hammocks. Hammocks are beds of string woven together and hung between two posts or trees. On the back of this page, draw yourself resting in a hammock. Then describe what you can see and hear and feel and smell.

Look It Up!

In the story, Curime loves fruit. Mangoes and papayas are fruits that grow in warm, tropical climates. Think of a few of your favorite fruits. Then choose one and find out where it is grown. Locate those places on a map or globe. (An encyclopedia will help.)

I like _____

They grow in _____

Think and Tell

What's a good way to let your "milk teeth" peek out from your smile? Share a joke or a riddle with your classmates.

Taiwan

台灣

Taiwan

Taiwan is an island in the Pacific Ocean, about 100 miles off the coast of China. It has over 20 million people who live in a land that is roughly one-fourth the size of Illinois. Taipei is the capital city.

Taiwanese and Mandarin are the main languages spoken in Taiwan. A strong sense of family unity, social responsibility, and obedience to parents and elders form the foundation of Taiwanese society. Living with parents and taking good care of them are basic Taiwanese obligations. Taiwan is an industrialized nation and has one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

The red, white, and blue flag of Taiwan stands for love, equality, and freedom.



Around the World

Use the information you have read about Taiwan to answer these questions.

1. What body of water surrounds Taiwan? _____
2. What countries are close to Taiwan?

3. How do you know that the idea of family is important to the people of Taiwan?

4. What do the red, white, and blue colors of Taiwan's flag stand for?

5. There are many people living in Taiwan.
What are some places you know that have large populations?

Make Your Own Flag of Taiwan.

Use red, white, and blue paper to construct the Taiwanese flag. Cut out and glue together the pieces you need. Note that there are 12 points on the white sun. They are positioned like the 12 numbers on a clock face.

Look It Up!

You have read that Taiwan has many industries. In your school or community library, find information about Taiwan. Make a list of some products that are made in Taiwan.





Yuan Hsiao Chieh

(LANTERN FESTIVAL)

The lantern festival is on the first full moon or the 15th day of the Chinese lunar calendar. In the English calendar, the festival will usually take place in February or early March. People gather at temples and other public places for viewing festive "lantern fairs."

After the family meal, children dress up in new clothes and carry their colorful lanterns to the temple. There are fireworks and popular cultural shows. Children participate in riddle-guessing contests that test their vocabulary and knowledge of culture and history.

Traditional lanterns are made of paper and brush painted in vivid colors. The festival is also the time to eat rice dumplings. The dumplings are round and symbolize family unity and completeness.



It's Your Turn!

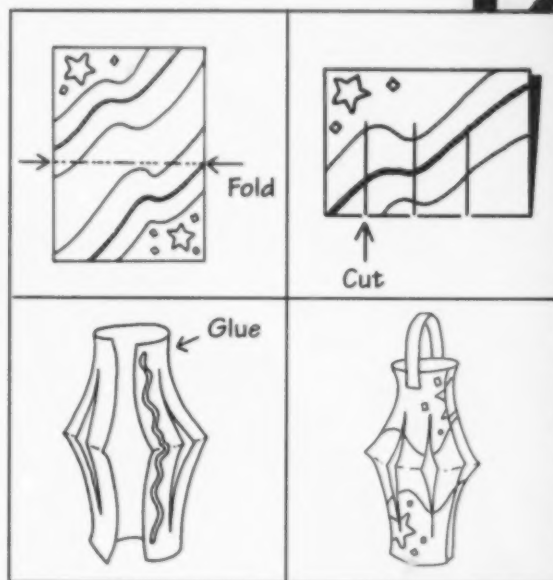
1. Have a riddle-guessing contest!

Think of a holiday or festival that you celebrate with your family or in your community. It might even be a carnival or a county fair. Make up a riddle about your special event. Write three clues below and see whether your friends can guess the answer.

The answer to my riddle is _____.

2. Make your own festival lantern.

1. Paint or color bright designs on both sides of a sheet of art paper.
2. Put the paper lengthwise in front of you. Fold the paper in half from bottom to top.
3. Cut several slits in the paper from the fold upward, but DO NOT cut all the way through to the top.
4. Unfold the paper. Glue the long edges together to form a tall round shape.
5. Add a paper-strip handle and hang the lanterns around the room.



Think and Tell!

Many cultures have foods that are made of a plain dough or dough with a filling, like the rice dumplings from Taiwan. Does your family enjoy ravioli? matzo balls? fritters? How many other dumpling-type foods can you think of?

Two Mules

By Huang Yi-wen

Once, a trader named Da-Shong had two mules named Ah-Fu and Shou-Bow. Ah-Fu was the lazy mule, and Shou-Bow was the hard-working one. Every day the mules carried goods to town to sell them at the marketplace. Ah-Fu, the lazy one, always chose the light loads and left the heavier ones for Shou-Bow.

One day, Da-Shong set out to sell some salt and some cotton. Ah-Fu carried the cotton and walked quickly ahead. Shou-Bow had to carry the salt. The weight of the salt made walking difficult for him. When they were crossing a bridge on the Dan-She river, Shou-Bow fell into the water.





Da-Shong ran to the river's edge and pulled Shou-Bow to safety. Do you know what happened? Shou-Bow's load became lighter, and he felt relieved. Soon he began to walk in front of Ah-Fu.

Now Ah-Fu wanted to lighten his burden, too. So when they crossed another bridge on the Ki-Long river, Ah-Fu deliberately fell into the water.

Again, Da-Shong pulled his mule from the water. Oh! Oh! What happened next? Ah-Fu's load of cotton got heavier and heavier until he could hardly stand steady!

When they finally arrived at the marketplace, Ah-Fu was very tired. He realized that he was not as clever as he had thought, and he decided not to be so lazy anymore.



Story Sense

Think About It!

Did you wonder why Ah-Fu's load of cotton seemed to get heavier? If you fell into water with all your clothes on, how would your clothes feel when you got out? Why?

Why do you think Shou-Bow's salt seemed lighter?

**You may wish to try this experiment to see for yourself.
Write down what you observe.**

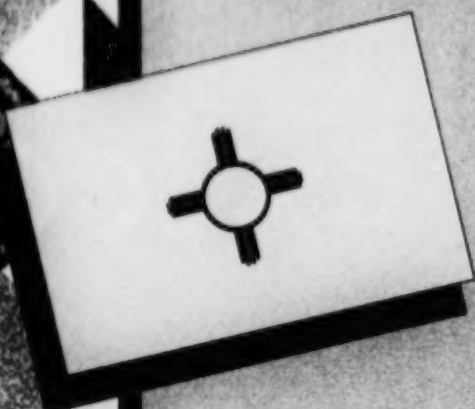
1. Put a cotton ball in a small cup or bowl and a spoonful of salt in another.
2. Fill each cup or bowl halfway with water.
3. Stir the water in each container.
4. Remove the cotton ball from the water. Does it feel lighter or heavier than when it was dry? Why?
5. Can you remove the salt from the water? What has happened?
6. What advice would you give Ah-Fu about jumping into the river?

Look It Up!

Mules are used in different places around the world to carry people and goods. What other animals are used, or have been used, for transportation? Draw a picture of an animal helping to move passengers or products.

New Mexico,
U.S.A.

New Mexico, U.S.A.



New Mexico, "the Land of Enchantment," is in the southwestern United States, between Texas and Arizona. Santa Fe is the capital city.

New Mexico is rich in Spanish and Indian cultures. It is the home of more than 100,000 Indians belonging to many different tribes, including the Navajo, Pueblo, Apache, and Zuni. Modern America meets old Spain in New Mexico, and both English and Spanish are spoken in state offices. New Mexico is diverse in landscape and culture. It has flat barren plains in the east and the rugged Rocky Mountains in the west, irrigated farmlands, and pine forests. One can find Spanish architecture as well as Indian pottery and turquoise and silver jewelry. New Mexico is truly a land of variety. The Governor's Palace in Santa Fe, now a museum, is the oldest public building in the United States. The spectacular Carlsbad Caverns in the south are considered the Eighth Wonder of the World.

The yellow and red state flag of New Mexico is the Navajo symbol of the sun in the desert.

Around the World

Native Americans were the first people to live in the area that has become New Mexico. Much later, Spanish-speaking explorers and settlers came. Even later, New Mexico became part of the United States.

The flag of New Mexico is yellow and red, like the flag of Spain. Its design is an Indian symbol. What does this design stand for?

Some Native Americans have used symbols to tell about nature and events.

Invent one or two symbols that describe the town or state where you live. Decide on colors to use and make a flag of your own in the space.

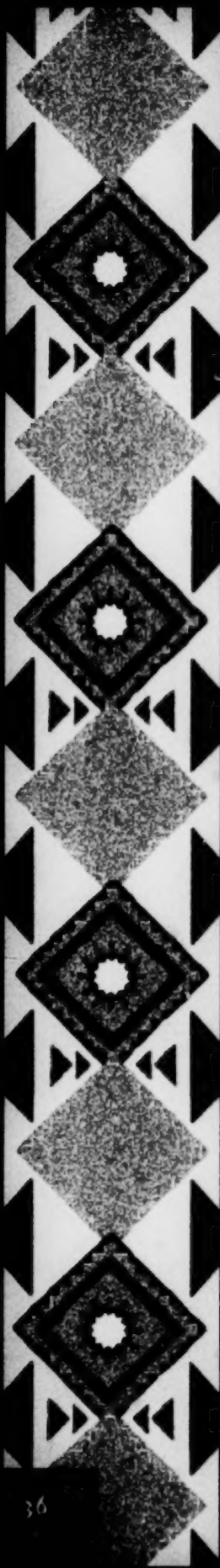


Look It Up!

1. Find out more about New Mexico. Design a travel poster showing facts about Santa Fe or the Carlsbad Caverns. Or read about one of the groups of Native Americans that lives in New Mexico, and prepare a short talk.
2. The Seven Wonders of the World come from ancient times. Find out what they were. See how many of their sites you can locate on a world map.

Think and Tell

New Mexico's nickname is the Land of Enchantment. What is your state's nickname and why was it chosen?



international **Balloon Fiesta** (FESTIVAL)

The International Balloon Fiesta is held every October in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the "Balloon Capital" of the world. Each year, between 500 and 600 balloons soar into the sky, making this fiesta one of the most photographed and colorful spectator events in the United States.

The balloons include propane-driven hot-air balloons and gas balloons filled with helium. Pilots, visitors, and media persons come from across the United States and many other countries to participate in this festival.

The "Special Shape Rodeo" that features balloons in various shapes is especially attractive to children. It combines design artistry with fantasy. Shapes in past years have included a Santa Claus, Pink Elephant, Flying Saucer, and the Cow Jumping Over the Moon.

Another feature of the fiesta is the "Balloon Glow" when airships light up the night sky with dazzling colors.

Competitive events, rides, skydiving, air shows, parades, and concerts are held throughout the week of the fiesta.



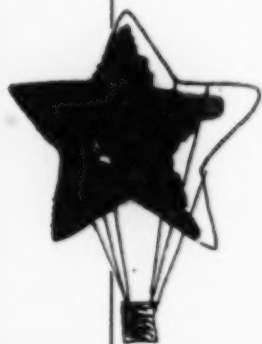
It's Your Turn!

Have you ever seen or ridden in a hot-air balloon? Was the balloon colorful? Did it have a special design?

Parades in large cities often include huge balloons in the shapes of characters from cartoons or stories. Which ones have you seen?

Balloon Fiesta Fun

Imagine that you have been asked to enter a balloon in the "Special Shape Rodeo." Design and color your balloon in the space below. Then write a short description of your entry.



About My Balloon: _____

Gabby Diego

By Jean Devlin

Behind the Acoma hills in what is now New Mexico, a baby boy was born to the Herrera family of shepherds. They named the baby Diego and expected that someday he, too, would be a shepherd.

Diego was a quiet baby who grew to be an active child. He raced with the lambs. He chased the sheep. He ran joyfully around his hut. But in all his five years, Diego never spoke a single word.

Things changed suddenly one day. "Mama, Papa, have you seen the sunrise? It's gold and pink and purple. And aren't the sheep wonderful? I want to be a shepherd, too." On and on Diego talked. Neighbors kept coming by to witness the miracle. Mama and Papa Herrera laughed and shouted and clapped!

By noon, people were getting tired of listening to Diego. By evening, they had all fallen asleep in the Herreras' hut. No chores got done that day as long as Diego talked and TALKED.

When he wore down, about nine that night, Diego fell asleep. Only then did people wake and begin the day's chores—very quietly, so as not to disturb Diego. And so it went—day after day, year after year. Gabby Diego talked and TALKED. He was so boring, people fell asleep listening to him and had to do their day's work by night.

When "Gabby" Diego was 10, he was old enough to be a shepherd. That meant that the villagers could attend to their chores by day, now that Diego was safely away with the flock. At first Mama and Papa were worried. How could a small boy watch all those sheep? But Gabby Diego was very happy. He talked to the wind, he talked to the hills, and he talked to the sheep. The sheep grew content and sleepy. They snuggled, they slept, and their fleece began to grow softer and thicker.

As time passed, the Herrera family became rich and famous, for their sheep grew the finest wool that made the softest blankets and the warmest sweaters.



Now it happened that the ruler of that land, far away from the hills of Acoma, suffered from insomnia and could not sleep. He offered a reward of 50 gold pieces to the person who could put him to sleep. Many tried, but all failed.

Then one day Gabby Diego came to the king's city for a festival. He was very excited to be among the crowd and started talking. The yawning crowd took him to see the king, as Diego continued to talk and TALK.

All at once, the king's breathing got slower. His eyelids got heavier. His head started to nod and—he fell asleep!

When Diego wore down, about nine that night, the sleeping city woke and began to go about its business—very quietly, so as not to wake Diego. But the happy king was so delighted with his long nap that he decided to spend all his time sleeping. He gave Diego the 50 gold pieces and the throne!

As ruler, Gabby Diego continued to talk and TALK. This caused the people to sleep by day and work by night. But no one complained. It was a very sleepy, peaceful kingdom. Zzzzzzz.



Story Sense

1. Many words that we use come from other cultures and languages. Look over these Spanish words and their meanings. Which have you heard? Which are new to you?

siesta	a nap
tortilla	a corn or flour pancake
fiesta	festival
taco	a crisp tortilla filled with meat, vegetables, or cheese
pueblo	town

2. Read this short story. Rewrite the story, but change the underlined words to the Spanish words with the same meaning.

Diego walked a long way to the town festival. He saw a vendor fry a corn or flour pancake until it was crisp. Then he ate a delicious crisp tortilla filled with meat, vegetables, and cheese. Diego began to talk and talk. Everyone else just sat down for a nap.

Advice for a King

In the story, the king had trouble falling asleep. What would you have done or said to help the king solve his problem?

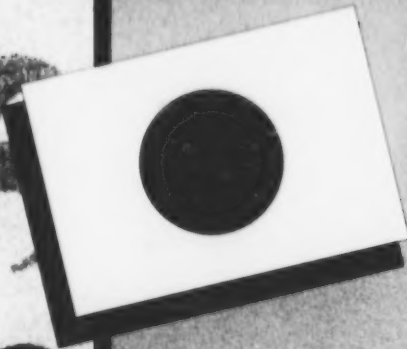
Think and Tell

What are some other words or phrases you use that come from languages other than English? Think of foods you enjoy. Think about the R.S.V.P. on an invitation. There are many examples.

Japan

日本

Japan



Japan, the land of the rising sun, is a beautiful island country in the Pacific Ocean. It has four main islands, and its land area is slightly smaller than California. Its capital, Tokyo, is one of the largest cities in the world.

Japan is one of the most productive industrial nations. Japanese electronics and cars are popular all over the world. *Sushi*, or uncooked fish, is a popular Japanese dish. Rice and tea are served with nearly every meal. People in Japan have a strong sense of family honor, group loyalty, and hard work. Students work very hard in school and have to pass highly competitive entrance examinations at various levels in their education. Japanese respect for nature's beauty and harmony is reflected in the art of *ikebana*, a distinctive style of arranging flowers.

The national flag depicts a red sun amid a white background.



Around the World

Use what you have read to complete these sentences.

1. Japan is a country of four main _____ in the ocean.
2. Japan covers about as much land as the state of _____.
3. One of the largest cities in the world is _____, Japan.

Japan is known as the land of the rising sun. How is this reflected in the design of Japan's flag? _____

Complete the following chart by adding at least two facts about Japan to each category.

	JAPAN	
Products	Food and Drink	Values

Look It Up!

The Japanese have a great love for the beauty and harmony of nature. They gave the United States a gift of cherry trees in the early 1900s. These trees in Washington, D.C., are full of beautiful blossoms each spring. In a book or encyclopedia, find out more about **ikebana**, the Japanese art of flower arranging. Then paint or color a picture of something in nature that you find beautiful.

Hina Matsuri

(DOLL FESTIVAL)

Doll Day, or Hina Matsuri, is celebrated on March 3. The festival is especially for young girls rejoicing in their growth and good health. On this day, family parties are held throughout the country. Graceful dolls, dressed in ancient court costumes, are displayed on tiers of shelves inside the homes. The dolls are sometimes handed down from generation to generation.

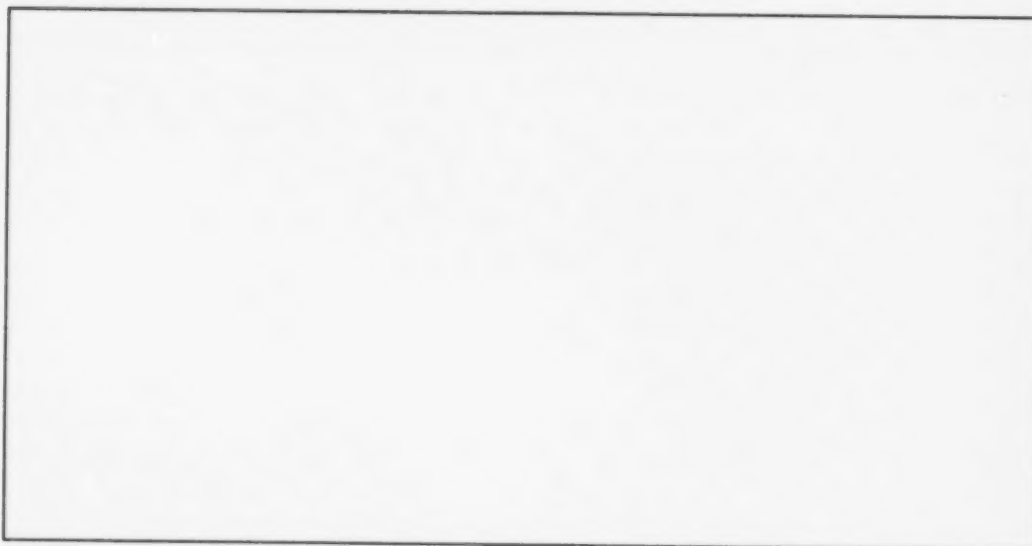
In some towns in Japan, dolls made of bamboo and paper are placed on straw boats along with rice cakes and flowers and sprinkled with sake wine. Children and adults cheer and pray as the dolls float away to the spirit world. It is believed that the dolls send back heavenly protection against sickness and misfortune.



It's Your Turn!

Some of the Hina Matsuri dolls are handed down from one person to another in a family. Think of something you or your family has that once belonged to another family member.

Draw a picture of that special item. (Or you may wish to draw an item that you would like to hand down someday.)



An **heirloom** is a special treasure that has been handed down in a family. Finish this sentence about the item you drew.

My heirloom is special because _____

A

Gift From the Star

By Atsuko Sakaue

Once upon a time a little boy named Taro enjoyed looking at the sky each night. One night he saw a very beautiful star shining in the sky and wondered how he could catch it.

Taro took out his cricket box and net and ran outside. He set a ladder against his building and climbed to the roof. But the star was too far away to catch.

Next, Taro climbed the chimney, which was higher than the roof. Still, the star was beyond reach. He went up to the top of the next building and the next, but the star remained out of reach.

Taro was very sad. "Ah, I can't catch that star. I don't know how to get it," he said to himself.

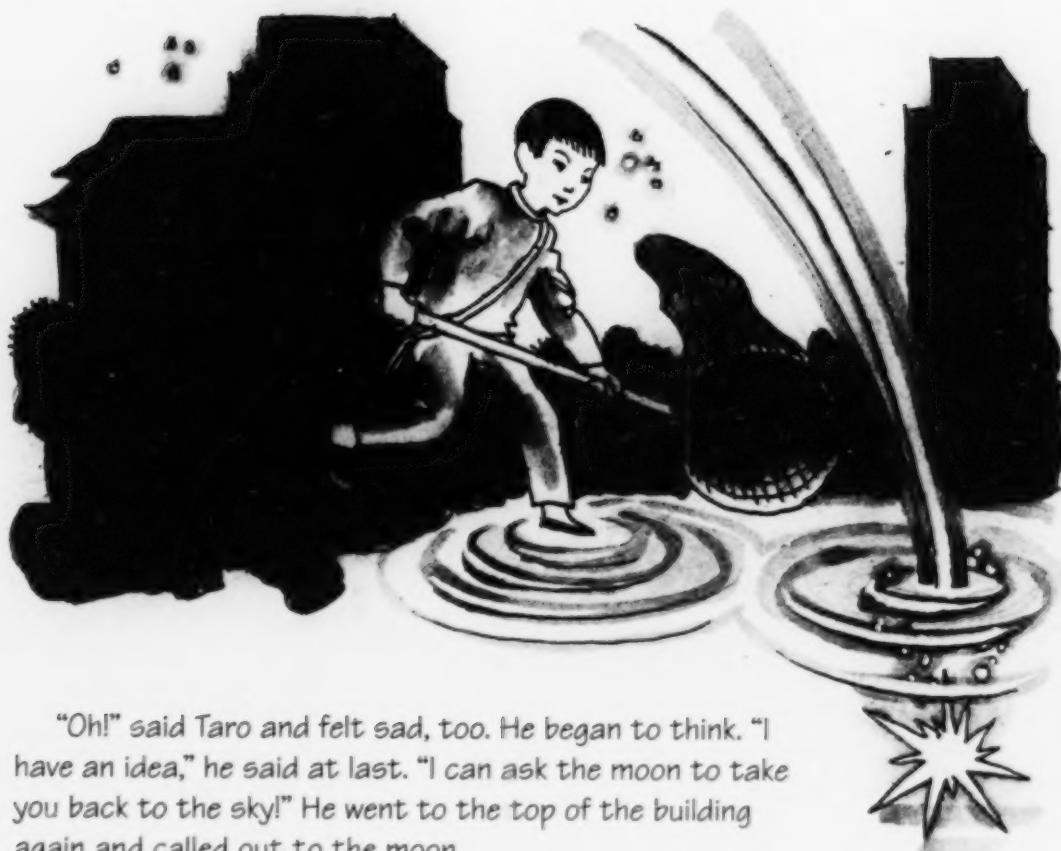
Just then, Taro saw the star fall from the sky, for it was a shooting star. He was very surprised, and thought, "I want to catch the star! I'm going to run to where it has fallen!"

Taro ran and ran until he reached a pond. He was out of breath. Then he saw something shining in the water. Taro got into the water and waded very quietly toward it. He scooped up the star with his net. "My star!" he shouted with joy, "I did it! I got the star I really wanted!"

But the star looked so sad. "What's the matter with you?" Taro asked. "Why do you look so sad?"

The star answered, "I fell down from the sky by mistake. I want to go back to my mother."





"Oh!" said Taro and felt sad, too. He began to think. "I have an idea," he said at last. "I can ask the moon to take you back to the sky!" He went to the top of the building again and called out to the moon.

The moon came near and asked, "Why do you want me?"

Taro replied, "I have a favor to ask you. I would like you to take this star back to the sky."

The moon said, "Oh, that's no problem at all."

Taro said good-bye, and the star and the moon also said good-bye to Taro.

The next night, Taro woke in the middle of his sleep and saw a bright light shining through his bedroom window. He looked out and saw hundreds and thousands of stars dancing in the sky. Then he saw the star that he had helped the night before. The star smiled down and said, "Thank you for helping me last night. In return, these stars are a special gift from me!"

Story Sense



"Mukashi Mukashi . . ."

. . . means "once upon a time" in Japanese. "A Gift From the Star" is a make-believe tale, but parts of it are realistic. On the lines below, write three details from the story that are imaginary and three events that could happen.

Make-Believe	Realistic
1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____

Look It Up!

Are shooting stars really stars that fall to Earth? Do a little digging and discover the scientific explanation for these nighttime wonders. Write a short explanation of what you find.

Think and Tell

Taro's cricket box is known as a **mushikago** in Japan. Children there like to catch crickets with a net and then bring them home in a mushikago. What are your favorite games or sports or toys? What sports or games do you know of that come from cultures other than yours?

India

भारत

I India



India, the largest democracy in the world, is in Southern Asia. It has more than 800 million people in an area about one-third of the United States. New Delhi is the capital city.

One of the oldest civilizations in the world, India is a land of ethnic and geographical diversity reflected in the richness of its languages, literature, music, and arts. The Taj Mahal, a magnificent structure of 17th-century India, is one of the seven wonders of the world. Indians are known to be polite and hospitable. Greetings are commonly exchanged with the graceful *namaste* gesture of folding the palms of the hands together below the chin. The *saree* is very popular among women in India. It is a long piece of specially-designed fabric that is wrapped in different styles in different regions of India.

The Indian flag has yellow, white, and green horizontal bands and a blue spoked wheel in the center. Yellow symbolizes sacrifice, white represents truth, and green signifies faith. The wheel, or *chakra*, was the royal emblem of Emperor Ashoka and is the symbol of progress.

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Around the World

1. Use the map and the information you have read to answer these questions.

Which country is the largest democracy in the world? _____

India is in the southern part of which continent? _____

Much of India is a peninsula that extends into what ocean? _____

Name three countries that are near India.

2. Words from India

India is a large country with a huge population. Use the following words from Indian culture to complete the sentences below.

namaste **saree** **chakra**

The wheel, or _____, is a symbol of progress.

The _____ is a polite way to greet each other in India.

A long piece of fabric wrapped and worn as a dress is a _____.

Think and Tell

1. Practice the namaste gesture of greeting another person. What are some ways that people in other cultures greet each other?
2. Why do you think the wheel would be chosen as a symbol of progress?

Look It Up!

The city of New Delhi represents the present in India. The Taj Mahal is from its past. Find more information about either New Delhi or the Taj Mahal. Tell how either provides clues to the Indian way of life.



Diwali

(FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS)

The festival of lights, Diwali, is one of the biggest celebrations in India. This holiday is also the longest in India and usually falls in November. For this festival, people decorate their houses with flower and leaf garlands and cook sweets and tasty snacks. Early in the morning, people bathe, wear new clothes, and visit the temples. The rest of the day is spent visiting relatives and friends.

As dusk falls, women and children decorate their homes by drawing special designs on the thresholds with colored sand. Tiny oil lamps set at regular intervals around the house and on the window panes are then lit. The children, family, and friends gather together to watch fireworks throughout most of the night.



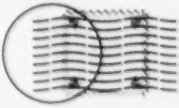
It's Your Turn!

Like Diwali in India, many cultures and religions have holidays when lights have special meaning. What celebrations do you know in which lights play a part?

Design a picture postcard showing light used for a certain celebration.



**Write a short message to a friend on the "back" of the postcard.
Describe the scene you have drawn on the "front."**

Message:	Address: 
---	---

HIRA,

The Magic Parrot

By Priya Banerjee and Sunitha Ragala

In Rampur, a village in northern India, there lived an old man by the name of Bhola. He was poor and feeble and found it difficult to earn his living.

One day, Bhola went into the forest to collect firewood. By midday, he was too tired to carry even his small load. He stopped to rest under a banyan tree and began to lament loudly, "Oh! I am so tired, I have nothing to eat. If I don't carry this firewood to the village to sell, I shall have no food for tomorrow. What shall I do. . . ?"

On the banyan tree sat a bright green parrot named Hira. She was pretty, with a red beak and a fine tail. Hira was a magic bird and could speak all human languages. She heard Bhola's cries and felt sorry for him. She flew down and spoke to him, "Old man, dry your tears. I can help you. I shall come to your window once every year and sing my magic song. The notes I sing will turn into gold, and you need never go hungry again." Bhola couldn't believe his luck. He thanked Hira and went home happy.

Early next morning, Hira was on the windowsill, singing her sweet song. Sure enough, the notes she sang turned into gold. Bhola scooped up the gold and rushed to the market to buy food. He ate to his heart's content.

Every year, Hira sang for Bhola. As years passed, Bhola grew greedy. "Why should I wait for Hira to come to me once a year? I shall make her sing for me every day, every hour, whenever I want. I will be the richest man in the village—in the whole world."

So Bhola prepared a delicious meal for Hira and put it in a cleverly concealed cage. When she came the next morning, Bhola invited her, "Come, my dear little Hira. This meal is especially for you."



As soon as Hira began to eat, she fell into Bhola's trap. Hira was at first terrified, and then furious. She said, "You ungrateful man! You've just destroyed your life. I shall never sing for you again!"

"Ahha! But you will, my little one," chuckled Bhola, "for you will never be free again."

Hira stopped and thought. "I shall have to trick Bhola and teach him a lesson he will never forget," she said to herself. Then she addressed Bhola. "You are foolish to trap me, Bhola, for I know a great secret—the secret of unimaginable wealth. I would have revealed it to you, but now I shall not."

"Secret? What secret? Wealth? Tell me about it NOW!" sputtered Bhola.

"There is a rare and precious diamond—the finest in the land. And only I know where it is," said Hira.

Bhola's mouth watered. "Take me there," he gasped. His hands trembled as he released Hira. She flew swiftly out of the window to safety.

"The diamond! The diamond! Take me to the diamond!" shrieked Bhola.

"The diamond," Hira said, "is this message: Don't let greed overcome you. Be content with what you have," and without another word, Hira flew away, never to return.



Story Sense

1. Why did Hira call her message a diamond? (Here's a hint: Think about the value of a real diamond.) _____

2. Bhola would have used the word **bazaar** for the marketplace. What is the usual meaning of *bazaar* for Americans? (Check the dictionary if you need an idea.) _____

3. Here are some foods that Bhola may have bought at the bazaar:

roti a flat bread

jelabi a sweet pretzellike treat

curry a spicy sauce cooked with vegetables and meat

Eating at the bazaar for Bhola is a little like eating at a carnival or festival or fair for us. What are your favorite carnival foods?

4. A *roti* is a type of flat bread in India. People of many backgrounds eat flat breads and different kinds of pancakes. What varieties of these foods can you think of?

Nigeria

N

igeria



Nigeria, the land of a thousand cultures, is located in western Africa. Nigeria is about the same size as California, Nevada, and Arizona. Its capital is located at Lagos on the Atlantic coastline.

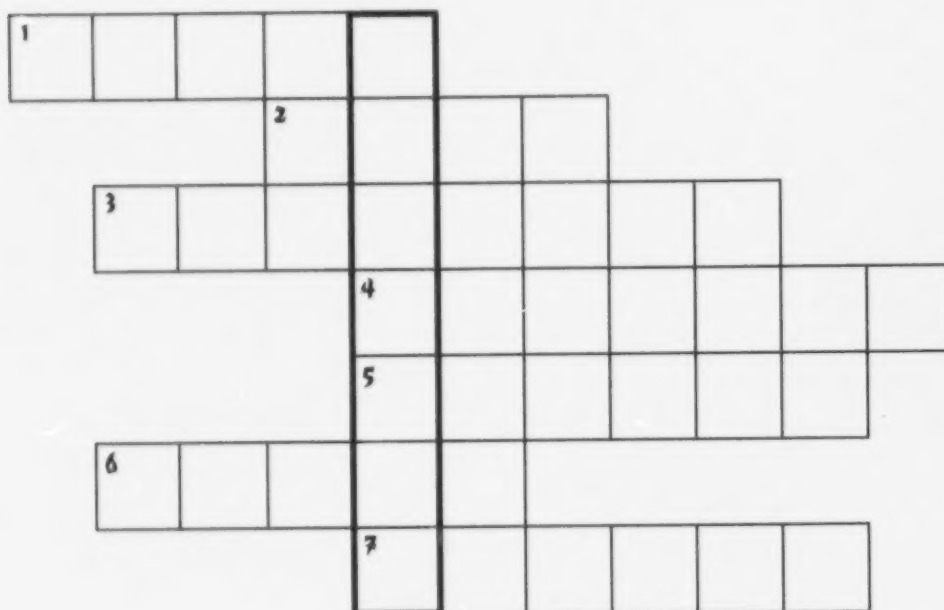
Nigeria is a beautiful country with a rich cultural heritage shared by more than 250 ethnic groups. Its geography is as diverse as its people, ranging from tropical rain forests, grassy plains, and mangrove swamps, to sandy beaches. Nigeria is hot and humid throughout the year. The main diet consists of yams, cassava, and rice. The meals are usually hot and spicy. English is the official language, and "Pidgin English" (a mix of English and native language) is widely used in Nigeria. Children are taught to develop deep respect for their elders and to obey adults.

The Nigerian flag has alternating vertical bands of green, white, and green. White signifies unity, peace and progress; green signifies agriculture, the main occupation of the Nigerians.

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Around the World

Complete this word puzzle about Nigeria. Use the clues at the bottom of the page and the letters of the word NIGERIA. Place only one letter in each space.



1. The color on the Nigerian flag that stands for agriculture is _____.
2. People in Nigeria eat mainly yams, cassava, and _____.
3. A tree that grows in the swamps of Nigeria is the _____.
4. Nigeria's official language is _____.
5. Children learn to _____ adults.
6. Nigeria's weather is hot and _____ all year.
7. Nigeria is on the continent of _____.



Yam Festival

Each year the yam festival is held at the end of the rainy season, between July and August. It celebrates the end of the farming season and the beginning of the harvesting season. During this festival, Nigerians visit friends and relatives, feast, dance, and exchange gifts and good wishes. The highlight of the festival is the dance contest. Children especially enjoy dancing at this festival. They dress in special outfits and wear beads around their ankles and waists. Sometimes, they wear masks on their faces. The girls wear shiny metal rings around their legs and arms and paint stripes on their faces. Prizes are given to the best group of young dancers.

The festival ends with a huge, communal feast where members of the village gather together and enjoy, among other foods, a variety of yam preparations. The feast also includes goat stew, pepper soup, and plantains served with vegetable soup and rice.



It's Your Turn!

1. Why would Nigerians celebrate at the end of the farming season?

2. What North American holiday began as a celebration of a good harvest?

3. What are some ways in which the Yam Festival in Nigeria and Thanksgiving in the United States are the same?

4. In what ways are the Yam Festival and Thanksgiving different?

Look It Up!

A yam grows underground and is similar to the vegetable we call a sweet potato. Now it's your turn! Find out what a **plantain** is and how the word is pronounced. See if you can find a picture of one.

THE

Tricky Turtle

AND ITS BROKEN SHELL

By Phil Alalibo

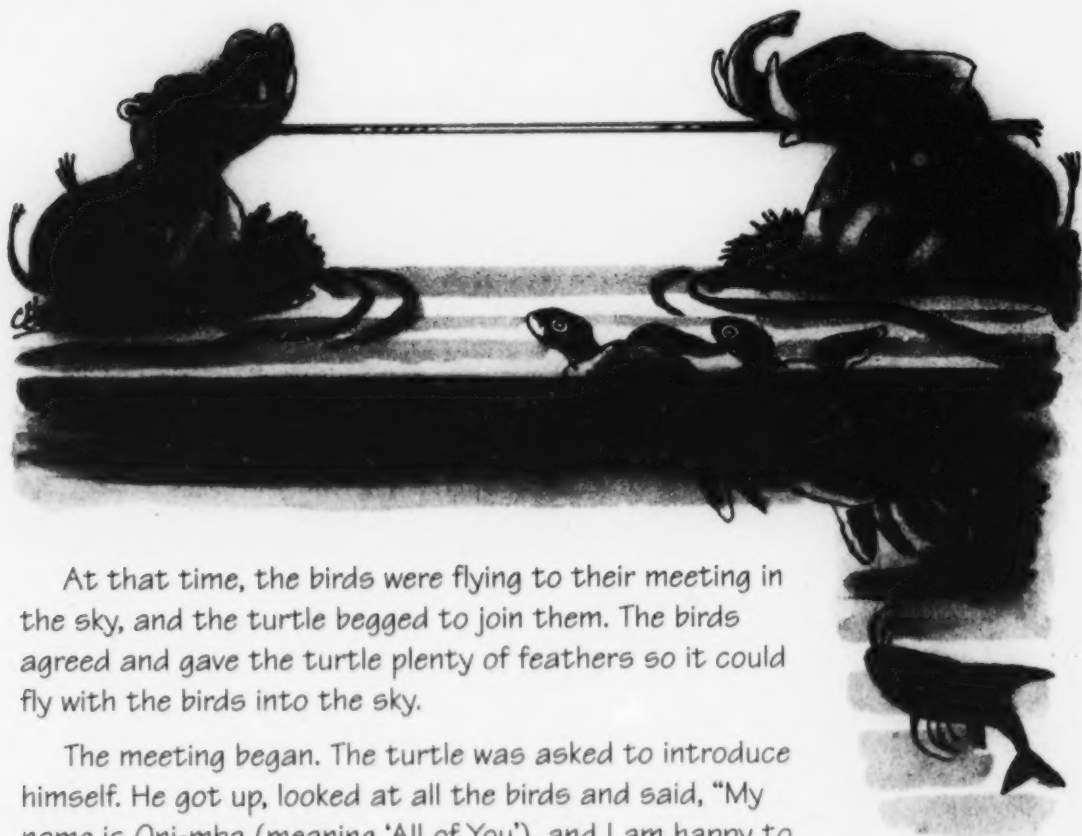
Do you know what a turtle's shell looks like? This Nigerian folktale tells why it looks that way.

Once upon a time, the animal kingdom wanted to choose a king to be its leader. Both the elephant and the turtle wanted to be king. The elephant was sure that he would win, but the turtle had a clever idea to defeat him. He challenged the elephant to a tug-of-war, with the winner to be crowned the new king. The elephant was surprised, but he agreed. The time and place were set for the match.

Meanwhile, the turtle went to the sea and challenged the hippo to a tug-of-war as well. When the hippo agreed, the turtle gave him the same time for the match as he had arranged with the elephant.

On the day of the tug-of-war, the hippo went to his end of the sea, and the elephant went to the other end, each thinking that the turtle was his opponent. The turtle, however, was in the middle of the sea with his wife, watching the elephant and the hippo pull the rope with all their strength. They pulled for several hours with no winner. Meanwhile, the catfish had gone for a swim in the middle of the sea. He saw the turtle and his wife getting ready to claim victory if the hippo won. The catfish quickly went to the elephant and told him what he saw.

The elephant became upset and declared himself king. He ordered all the animals to arrest the turtle who then had to run for his life.



At that time, the birds were flying to their meeting in the sky, and the turtle begged to join them. The birds agreed and gave the turtle plenty of feathers so it could fly with the birds into the sky.

The meeting began. The turtle was asked to introduce himself. He got up, looked at all the birds and said, "My name is Oni-mba (meaning 'All of You'), and I am happy to be here at this great meeting of the birds."

After the meeting, the birds were hungry. When the serving birds brought in food and drinks, the turtle asked them whom they were for. The serving birds replied, "They are for all of you." The turtle then said to the birds, "Remember, my name is 'All of You,' so the food and drinks are for me." Soon the turtle ate all the pounded yams that were served and drank all the coconut juice. He left nothing for the birds.

The hungry birds were very disappointed with the turtle and took back the feathers they had given him. The turtle looked down from the sky and started to fall. Down and down he fell until he hit the ground and his shell broke into pieces.

When the land animals reached the turtle, they took him to the hospital, where the pieces were patched together. That is why—to this day—the turtle has several patches on his shell.

Story Sense

"The Tricky Turtle and Its Broken Shell" is a tale told to explain something that occurs in nature.

1. What feature of a turtle's shell does this story explain?

2. According to the tale, why does the turtle's shell look as it does?

New Ending

What might have happened in the story if the catfish had not told the elephant about the turtle's trick? How would the story be different?

Now, write a few sentences that give the tale your new ending. The sentence below will get you started.

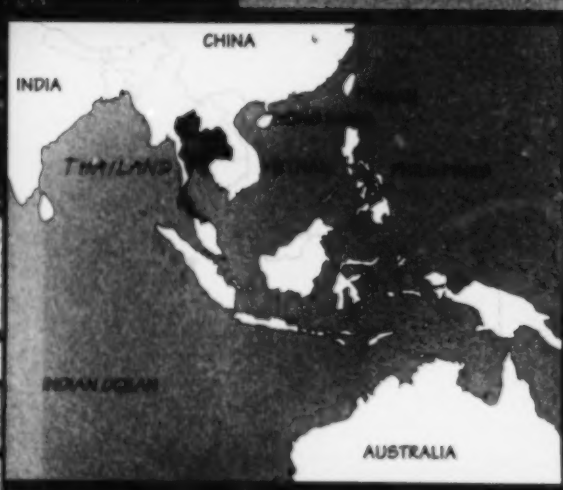
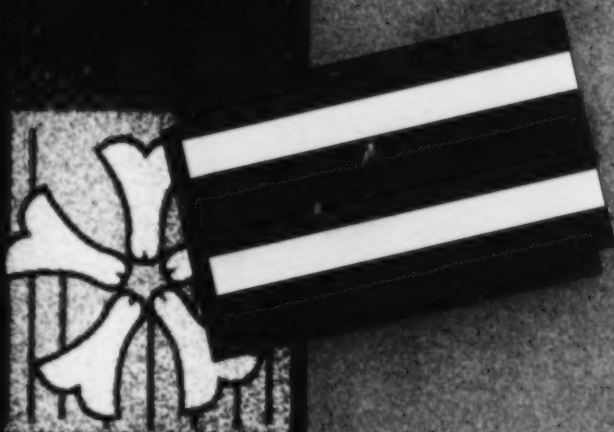
They pulled for several hours with no winner. _____

Thailand

ประเทศไทย



Thailand



Thailand, the "land of the free," is located in southeast Asia. It is slightly larger than Texas. Bangkok is the capital city.

Thailand has often been called the land of smiles. Thais are known to be gentle and lighthearted. They show great respect for their parents and other elder members of the family. People in Thailand greet each other by bringing together the palms of both hands in a prayer position at the chest and bowing slightly. Rice is the staple diet. Thai cooking is usually quite spicy. The warm weather and heavy monsoon rains keep Thailand green throughout the year, rich in tropical fruits and flowers.

The two red stripes at the top and bottom of the Thai flag represent the nation, the blue band in the middle represents royalty, and the white inner stripes represent religion.

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Around the World

Use the map and information about Thailand to think about these questions.

1. Part of Thailand is on the same peninsula as part of Malaysia. What other countries are near Thailand?

2. Compare the size of Thailand with one of the states in the United States.

3. Why might Thailand be known as the land of smiles?

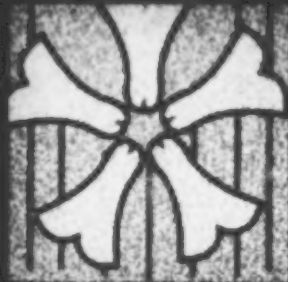
4. Why do tropical plants, fruits, and flowers grow year-round in Thailand?

Look It Up!

The monsoons in southern Asia begin in April. The wind changes direction and brings heavy rain off the sea. Find more details about monsoons and their effect on certain countries in Asia. Show the direction of the monsoon winds on a map.

Think and Tell

The Thai people are known to value the older members of their families. Do you feel that Americans respect their parents, grandparents, and older neighbors? Explain your answer.



Songkran

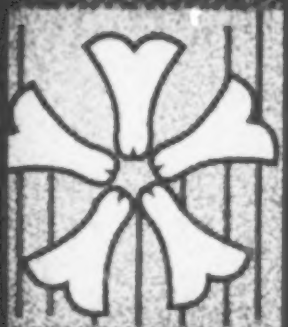
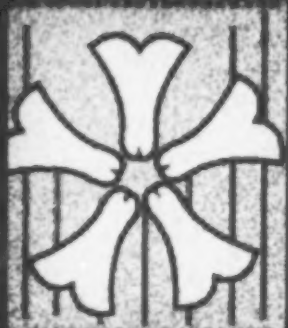
THE FESTIVAL

The Songkran festival celebrates the Thai New Year on the 13th of April. This is an official holiday in Thailand. It marks the end of the long period of dry weather and heralds the coming of the monsoon rains.

The highlight of the festival is the "water war," held in each town, in which adults and children play by splashing water at one another. This activity is considered to be a rain-making ritual and is derived from Thai legends that describe mythical serpents bringing rain by spouting water from the seas.

Children show their respect by pouring perfumed water into the palms of their grandparents, parents, teachers, and elder relatives. The elders, in turn, utter words of blessing for the children's happiness and prosperity.

Food is given to religious monks and needy people. Statues of Buddha and other saints are bathed ceremonially, and special prayers are offered for departed ancestors. Many Thai families buy birds, fish, and other pets at this time and then set them free as a gift of freedom and life. Various types of folk games and entertainment follow throughout the day.



It's Your Turn!

The Songkran festival celebrates . . .

1. the beginning of the _____ and
the beginning of the _____.
2. How do Thai legends explain the rain that falls on Thailand?

Your Own Songkran

Which part of the Songkran festival interests you the most?

In what ways could this tradition be carried out in your community? When would it be held? Write an advertisement telling people about the event and how it will happen.



HOW THE

Tiger Got Its Stripes

By Bamrung Torut and Sa-ngiam Torut

A long, long time ago, tigers in Thailand had golden fur coats. Their coats were not decorated with bold, black stripes. The tigers were proud of their golden coats, and all the other animals admired them.

During the monsoon season it always rained very hard. The plains and the forests usually flooded. The farmers prepared themselves for the long period of the floods by storing dried food and by building their houses on stilts to keep them above the water.

On one such monsoon day, Ta Tou, a basketmaker, needed to cut some rattan from the forest to weave baskets. His wife, Yai Dang, decided to stay at home. She packed some rice and shrimp paste in a banana leaf and gave it to Ta Tou for his lunch. Ta Tou bid good-bye to Yai Dang and set out for the forest.

On the way to the forest, Ta Tou met a beautiful, golden tiger. The tiger growled loudly and jumped to catch Ta Tou with his big paws. Ta Tou was very, very frightened.

He begged the tiger to spare his life. "If you eat me, you will be dead by tomorrow," said Ta Tou. He explained how the heavy rains would flood the forest and make it unsafe for the animals.

"But, if you let me go, I can tie you to a raft," Ta Tou continued. "Then you will be able to float and you won't drown."



The tiger laughed, "I don't have to worry. I can run quickly and climb a tree without a raft."

Ta Tou continued to explain: "The forest floods will be very strong. The current will be very fast, and many trees will fall. You may die if you don't have a raft."

The tiger felt uneasy and stopped to think for a while. Finally, he agreed to let Ta Tou make a raft. Ta Tou made the raft quickly, tied the tiger to it with rattan ropes, and hurried back to his house.

That night the sky was cloudy, but it did not rain. The two following nights it still did not rain. The tiger realized that Ta Tou had tricked him. He was very angry and tried to free himself. He twisted and turned his body again and again. The sharp rattan ropes made deep dark marks on his golden coat. Finally, he was able to free himself. But from that day on, tigers in Thailand have bold dark stripes on their golden bodies.

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Story Sense



1. According to the tale "How the Tiger Got Its Stripes," what did tigers first look like?

2. This story tries to explain something that occurs in nature. What kind of nature legends have you heard? Perhaps you have a way of explaining what it means when you hear a loud roll of thunder.

3. Try writing your own nature tale. Write a short imaginary description of how a leopard got its spots, why a frog is green, what causes a solar eclipse, or another idea of your own. Use the back of this page or another paper.

Words from Thailand

Find words in the story that fit these meanings and begin with the letters indicated.

1. palm tree stems used to weave baskets **r** _____
2. season of heavy rains **m** _____

Think and Tell

- **Ta Tou:** Ta is a polite way of addressing an older man. It is like saying "Grandpa Tou."
- **Yai Dang:** Yai is a polite way of addressing an older woman. It is like saying "Grandma Dang."

What titles or words do you use to be polite and show respect?

China

中国

China



China, in Asia, is the third largest country in the world. It has nearly one-quarter of the total world population. Though comparable in size, its population is four times that of the United States. Beijing is the capital city.

One of the oldest in the world, Chinese civilization dates back at least 3000 years. Chinese written language is rather difficult to learn and consists of thousands of characters, each depicting a picture. Chinese food is very popular outside China and is served in restaurants all over the world. The famous Great Wall of China, stretching across northern China, is the only man-made structure that can be seen from satellites in space.

The flag of China is red with five yellow stars. Red symbolizes socialism. The stars represent the Communist Party and the major nationalities in China.

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Around the World

Think about the information you have learned about China. On the lines below, write three facts that you did not know before now. You might talk about China's location, size, population, capital city, or language.

Share your ideas with others. How many different details has your class listed?

1. _____

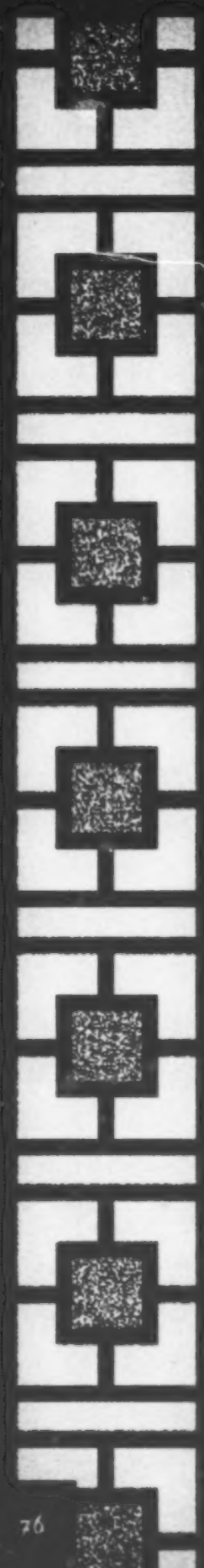
2. _____

3. _____

How do you know that China is more crowded than the United States?

Look It Up!

Read more about the Great Wall of China. You will find information in books about China or under *C* or *G* in the encyclopedia. You might try one of the magazines that is written especially for people your age. The librarian will be happy to help you.



Moon Festival

The Moon Festival, in celebration of a good harvest, is held in mid-autumn. On the lunar calendar, it is about the 15th day of August. It is believed that the brightest full moon can be seen on that night. The moon appears like a bright mirror in the sky. Traditionally, the Chinese believe that when they look at the moon at the same time, they can see their parents, relatives, and friends in that mirror.

People sit together and eat newly harvested food, especially the popular and delicious mooncakes. Mooncakes are made from sugar bean paste and a flour shell.



4. Mooncakes are popular Chinese treats at harvest time. What is your favorite holiday food or treat?

[illegible]

A

Magic Paintbrush

By Xiaoyang Yu and Bin Zhang

Ma-Liang, a shepherd boy, loved to paint. His parents, however, could not afford to buy him a paintbrush. The children he played with laughed at his dream of becoming a painter, but Ma-Liang was not discouraged. He thought, "It's true that I don't have money, but I know I can work hard. I've got to prove to myself that I am a good painter."

So he practiced painting all the time. When he was in the forest cutting firewood, he would draw pictures on the ground with a stick. When he was by the riverside herding sheep, he would wet his fingertips in the water and paint pictures on the rocks. His painting got better and better, and everything he painted looked more and more real.

Ma-Liang wished he could have a paintbrush. He thought about it all the time. . . . One night, an old man brought a paintbrush to his bedside. "Remember, Ma-Liang," said the old man, "this is a magic brush. Be sure to use it well." Before Ma-Liang could thank him, the old man disappeared.

Ma-Liang was extremely happy. He decided to try out his magic brush by painting a bird. As soon as he gave the last touch, the bird came alive and flew into the sky. It was really a magic brush! From then on, Ma-Liang used his magic brush well—as the old man had told him. He used it to paint food, clothes, and tools for the needy folks. His magic brush brought warmth and laughter to every poor person's cottage, near and far.

The greedy emperor heard about this and ordered Ma-Liang to paint only for him. The emperor ordered him to paint a glorious phoenix (a fairy-tale bird), but Ma-Liang



painted a hen instead. The emperor ordered Ma-Liang to paint a make-believe dragon, but Ma-Liang painted a snake. The emperor was furious and snatched away Ma-Liang's brush. He locked Ma-Liang in a small room without any food or drink.

Three days later, the emperor brought him some food and the magic brush. He ordered Ma-Liang to paint a mountain of gold. Ma-Liang wanted to get his brush back, so he agreed to paint. With only a few strokes, there appeared a shining gold mountain standing in a blue sea. Next there appeared a huge ship ready for sail. When the emperor got aboard, Ma-Liang continued painting. He painted strong winds. With the first touch, the ship sailed away. With the second touch, the ship flew over the waves. With the third touch, the ship jumped up and down in the storm. And with the fourth touch, the ship turned over and sank to the bottom of the sea—emperor and all.

Ma-Liang then stopped the winds and painted a beautiful sunset and a sky filled with soft clouds.

At last, Ma-Liang was free to return to his hometown and paint for the country folks. And he painted . . . and painted . . . and painted . . .

Story Sense *

1. Ma-Liang followed his dream and worked hard for what he wanted. Is there something you are good at that you want to keep doing as you grow up? What dreams do you have for your future?

2. In Ma-Liang's name, *Ma* is a family name that means *horse*. It is like your last name, but it comes first in Chinese names. *Liang* is a name for Chinese boys and means *good*.

How did you get your name? Are you named after someone? Do you know what your name means?

What is the origin of your last name? If you do not know, you can check with someone at home. It will be fun to talk about.

Your Magic Paintbrush

The imaginary phoenix that Ma-Liang was asked to paint is known as a **feng** in China. The dragon is called a **long**. On the back of this paper or on another sheet, use your imagination to draw or paint a make-believe creature.

RAINBOWS

Stories and Customs from Around the World

Created by Naseem Ahmed

Rainbows is much more than a storybook. Rainbows invites you and your students to visit nine regions of the world and to learn about the people, geography, customs, and culture of each area. Nine folk tales indigenous to each region enhance multicultural awareness, while student reproducibles provide rich opportunities for understanding and cross-cultural sharing. For grades 3-6.

About the Author

Originally from Bangladesh, Naseem Ahmed has lived in the United States for more than 20 years. She received her master's degree in public administration and has completed requirements for Ph.D. candidacy at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh. Her academic and research interests have focused on public policy, implementation, and policy change. Currently, Ms. Ahmed is assistant director of international development at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. She is also the coordinator of women in development at SIUC. In addition to her professional involvement with international projects and grants, Ms. Ahmed is active in community and women's organizations. She is highly committed to the promotion of multiculturalism in early childhood education and has worked extensively to deliver that message to U.S. schools.



GA 1561
ISBN 1-56417-855-2

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ISBN 1-56417-855-2



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